

Towing and Recovery Operator Law Statement

Virginia Chapter 891 of 2006:

- allows a mechanic's lien for towing, storage, and recovery of vehicles;
- increases to seven days the time garage keepers have to notify owners of towed vehicles that their vehicle has been towed and is being held at their garage; and
- increases the fee for storing a towed vehicle.

The bill revises the procedures by which towing and storage companies may seek to recover their fees and charges for towing away and storing immobilized and abandoned vehicles and provides that, when stolen vehicles are recovered, owners of the recovered vehicles pay the towing and storage charges and can be reimbursed from the appropriation for criminal charges.

The bill establishes a new Board of Towing and Recovery Operators to license and regulate the towing and recovery industry and tow truck drivers. The legislation provides that local towing regulations can be no less restrictive than those imposed by the Board for Towing and Recovery Operators. The measure directs that if a vehicle is towed from one locality to be stored in another, the ordinances of the locality from which the vehicle was towed shall apply.

The bill allows local governments to prohibit storage charges for periods of time when owners cannot reclaim their vehicles because the towing and recovery business is closed and place caps on the charges that these businesses may impose. It requires any such limits be subject to "periodic and timely" adjustments.

The Act prohibits certain relationships between towing and recovery businesses and the agents of property owners from whose property trespassing vehicles are towed by the towing and recovery businesses.

Submitted as:

Virginia

Chapter 891 of 2006

Status: Enacted into law in 2006.